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Senate

The Senate met at 9:15 a.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Today's prayer will be offered by our guest Chaplain, Rev. Richard A. Lapehn of Milton Presbyterian Church, Rittman, OH.

PRAYER

The guest Chaplain offered the following prayer:

Let us pray:

Triumphant and holy God, ruler of Heaven and Earth, You have given to us the privilege of living in these unprecedented times. We know that our hope is vain when it is placed in humankind. Scripture cries aloud, "As the heavens are higher than the earth, so are My ways higher than your ways, and My thoughts than your thoughts" declares the Lord (Isaiah 55:9). Blessed is the Nation whose God is the Lord.

May we listen for Your voice and learn, hear and obey You amid the competing pressures for our time. Our world will not thrive with pusillanimous leaders, bereft of the courage to speak and act for those things which are just and right in Your eyes. These uncommon days require leaders who will seek out Your vision, soak up Your wisdom, and rely upon Your strength for the rigorous task they face.

May debate be lively and leavened with hope, may conversations uplift and encourage, and may the words spoken in this Chamber bring persistent honor to Your Name. Bless each Senator with Your mercy, Your peace, and Your abiding Spirit. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The PRESIDENT pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this morning the Senate will immediately resume consideration of S. 1, the prescription drug benefit/Medicare bill. Under the previous agreement, the Senate will begin two back-to-back rollcall votes shortly. We were in late last night, and we set those votes to occur the first thing this morning.

The voting schedule will be as follows: The first vote will be in relation to the Harkin amendment No. 991 dealing with demonstration programs. The second vote will be in relation to the Edwards amendment No. 1052 dealing with drug advertising. For the remainder of the day, we will continue to debate and vote on amendments to S. 1.

We have made very good progress over the last 2 weeks on this bill. The Democratic leader and I were just talking, and we still have 50 amendments pending. It is my hope a number of these amendments will be disposed of by voice vote. I know the managers are working along that line. Inevitably, though, we are going to have a very heavy voting schedule today and into this evening. Members should expect rollcall votes throughout the day and, if necessary, into the wee hours of the morning on Friday. We will know a little bit later today the pace of these amendments and how they can best be handled.

My intention was to finish this bill before the July 4 recess. I think everybody is working in good faith to do just that. With the cooperation of all Members, and if we are able to continue voting throughout the day and the debate-and-amendment process, we may be able to pass this legislation this evening.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. The Democratic leader is recognized.

Mr. DASCHLE. Mr. President, I have indicated to the majority leader that I intend to work with him today to schedule as many of these votes and to work through the pending amendments.

As he noted, there are approximately 50 pending amendments. It is my hope that our managers might look carefully at many of them and perhaps accept them on voice votes, but those requiring rollcalls I hope can be scheduled earlier rather than later throughout the day.

We will work on our side to perhaps offer them en bloc, where we could have a sequence of rollcall votes throughout the day, but we certainly will work with the majority leader to see if we can accomplish as much as he has laid out for the schedule, with an expectation that perhaps by the end of this evening we will have completed our work on the bill.

I yield the floor.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

PRESCRIPTION DRUG AND MEDICARE IMPROVEMENT ACT OF 2003—Resumed

The PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the hour of 9:15 a.m. having arrived, the Senate will proceed to the consideration of S. 1, which the clerk will report.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A bill (S. 1) to amend title XVIII of the Social Security Act to make improvements in the Medicare Program, to provide prescription drug coverage under the Medicare Program, and for other purposes.

Pending:

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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